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Sons and kindred may free a father from his debts; but other than a man's self, none can free him from bondage. —CREST JEWEL OF WISDOM.

THEOSOPHY

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H. P. BLAVATSKY—MORAL PIONEER

THE so-called "biographies" of H. P. Blavatsky are not greatly valued by students of Theosophy for the reason that no one except a high initiate would be able to do justice to the life and mission of the Teacher of the nineteenth century. Biographies are written at the personal level, and H. P. B.'s personal life, of all that is to be known of her, is of the least importance. The true life story of a soul is the story of the soul's purpose. Where is the writer capable of setting forth the purpose of H. P. B. in any but the most general terms?

To write with understanding about H. P. Blavatsky requires a thorough knowledge of her work. This means growing into a realization of the all-encompassing objective of the Theosophical Movement; it means to grasp the essentials of the Theosophical philosophy and then to apply these laws to the great movement of human history through the ages. To write a just biography of H. P. B. would be to show that her every action, however trivial in appearance, however puzzling in its immediate connections, was indeed an expression of this unwavering motive. Who has the knowledge for such a task?

The modern world labors under the delusion of literalism. It supposes that we have not knowledge of a man until all his personal foibles have been recorded, the petty incidents of his career arranged in chronological order. The grand intuition of antiquity, which found ultimate biographic truth in myths and hero-legends, has been smothered by a blind devotion to insignificant detail. And this, greatest delusion of all, is thought to be *scientific!*

Who of our modern scholars suspects that the biography of every man, the history of every nation, is contained in the pages of *The Bhagavad-Gita?* Every Scripture reveals the same essential truth.

"The Christian canon, especially the *Gospels, Acts,* and *Epistles,* are made up of fragments of gnostic wisdom, the ground-work of which is *pre-Christian* and built on the MYSTERIES of Initiation." How can any biography have even the similitude of truth, unless the writer is pervaded by some deep sense of the purpose of life, which reflects itself in his picture of the development of his character? No book which is lacking in this background of value can be of lasting importance or worthy of the attention of serious students.

William Q. Judge has written:

> All human beings are working through this system of initiation, and for that reason it includes all the exoteric societies. Very often the Masters . . . have appeared in those when they saw an opportunity for sowing the seed, which, although for a time to be enclosed in the shell of formalism, was to be preserved for future use; just as the Egyptian mummy held in its hand for centuries the germ that blossomed and bore fruit in our day. And since man in all his struggles must be helped, they have assisted in political changes where a hope was held out for the rise of a beneficent era. The great mass of men are not with their own knowledge engaged in the work of this powerful and impregnable *Lodge,* but they will knowingly engage therein some point in the course of their long evolution. And yet at every hour of each day these Masters are willing and anxious to meet those who are clear-eyed enough to see their true destiny, and noble-hearted so as to work for "the great orphan, Humanity."

Consider the vast change involved in re-orientating all our knowledge of biography and history from this point of view. Yet if H. P. Blavatsky is to be understood, every movement of the human spirit, every struggle of the heart to serve, of the mind to know, must be recognized as part of "the work of this powerful and impregnable *Lodge.*" Nothing is or is to be left out. As Mr. Judge wrote elsewhere, "The deeds of men, the enterprises of merchants, and the wars of soldiers all follow a law implicitly, a law that is written in the stars, and while they copy the past they ever symbolize the future."

The life of H. P. Blavatsky differed from that of ordinary men in that She, consciously, and with the vision that sees past, present and future as *one,* followed implicitly that law. The pattern of her movements and many-sided activity was not the result of a benevolent opportunism, advantaging each turn of events as it emerged into the present. The plan of the Theosophical Movement, *her* plan, "was all out of stern necessity, with a wisdom derived from many older heads, having in view the cycles as they sweep resistlessly forward." When those cycles are fully understood—when the peri-

odic operation of karmic law, which was the study of one of the Theosophical Adepts for *fifteen years,* has been mastered—then will be time for publication of the biography of H. P. Blavatsky!

But we are not without fitting knowledge of the nature of H. P. B. The articles left by her Colleague, William Q. Judge, are a bridge which joins our human understanding with something of her spirit. Then, her own words, compiled from letters, in "She Being Dead, yet Speaketh," bear the strength of her heart, the quiver of her hopes for those she came to serve. H. P. B.'s Promethean sacrifice in their behalf is suggested by a passage from *The Secret Doctrine:*

> Old and time-honoured errors—such as become with every day more glaring and self-evident—stand arrayed in battle order now, . . . Marshalled by blind conservatism, conceit and prejudice, they are constantly on the watch, ready to strangle every truth, which, awakening from its age-long sleep, happens to knock for admission. Such has been the case ever since man became an animal. That this proves in every case *moral death* to the revealers, who bring to light any of these old, old truths, is as certain as that it gives LIFE and REGENERATION to those who are fit to profit even by the little that it now revealed to them.

Time was when the innovator, the reformer, the spiritual teacher, was made to hang upon a physical cross, literally to wear a crown of thorns. But under the law of cycles, humanity is rapidly approaching the day when experiences, both good and evil, will be almost wholly lived out in the mind. Thus the persecutions borne by H. P. B. were not so much of the body as of the mind. No hand was raised against her physical person, but how many poisoned tongues were pointed at her heart—her character and good name? Like Christ before her, She had her Judas to betray her to the Roman soldiers, but not physical forces, not brutish guards in armor delivered H. P. B. to her moral executioners. It was the custodians of conventionality, the preservers of orthodox sham, who complacently repeated the lies and slanders which closed the minds of millions to the saving philosophy of H. P. B. More subtle than an attack on the mere body of the Teacher, the enemies of truth, using the very weaknesses of Theosophists themselves, spent their corruption at the psychic level of human intercourse. If the work of the Theosophical Movement in this epoch is toward a "change in the Manas and Buddhi of the Race," is it not natural for the Agent of that Movement to suffer through dark perversions of the lower mind, as representing the retrograde motion of the cycle?

There is pioneering of various sorts. Here in America, a noble tradition of braving hazards of nature, of overcoming enormous

material obstacles, has been built up over centuries of pioneering. H. P. Blavatsky inaugurated the beginning of a cycle of pioneering of a higher order—*Manasic pioneering*. She was and is the herald of the dawning mind of tomorrow. While there were Messengers who came before, not one of them could give his life entire to the spread of the universal Wisdom Religion; not one but had to compromise the larger longings of his heart with particular and limited channels of expression. But in 1875, the hour struck for laying the foundation of a new order of ages in spiritual reality, in its own right. H. P. B. worked through none of the pre-existing forms of the Theosophical Movement, but forged her own: *The Nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity*. Although she built upon the work of the forerunners, without which her own mission would have been impossible, the past gave her only building blocks, tools and workers. The design for the Temple she erected, and the Spirit which at last found its embodiment in the fane, were things the western world knew nothing of before. She had brought them from the Source, to the New World, and for the World that is to be.

The biography of H. P. Blavatsky is the history of an age. Of the great drama she initiated, and which moves on to its climax in the twentieth century, William Q. Judge has written:

> The race is, as a whole, in a transition state, and many of its units are kept back by the condition of the whole. We find the path difficult because, being of the race, the general race tendencies very strongly affect us. This we cannot do away with in a moment. . . . The only way we can alter it is by such action now as makes of each one a center for good, a force that makes "for righteousness" and that is guided by wisdom. . . .
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> The new condition calls for a change in thought and nature. So the Masters have said this is a transition age, and he who has ears to hear will hear what has thus been said. We are working for the new cycles and centuries. What we do now in this transition age will be like what the great Dhyan Chohans did in the transition point—the midway point—in evolution at the time when all matter and all types were in a transition and fluid state. They then gave the new impulse for the new types, which resulted later in the vast varieties of nature. In the mental development we are now at the same point and what we now do in faith and hope for others and for ourselves will result similarly on the plane to which it is all directed. . . .
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> We are not working for some definite organization of the new years to come, but for a change in the Manas and Buddhi of the Race. That is why it may seem indefinite, but it is, nevertheless, very defined and very great in scope.

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY: ITS MISSION AND ITS FUTURE

By H. P. BLAVATSKY

II

HAVING fallen into the common error, M. Burnouf continues:

> Many will say: It is a chimerical enterprise; it has no more a future before it than has the New Jerusalem of the Rue Thouin, and no more *raison d'être* than the Salvation Army. This may be so; it is to be observed, however, that these two groups of people are *Biblical Societies,* retaining all the paraphernalia of the expiring religions. The Theosophical Society is the direct opposite; it does away with figures, it neglects or relegates them to the background, putting in the foreground Science, as we understand it today, and the moral reformation, of which our old world stands in such need. What, then, are today the social elements which may be for or against it? I shall state them in all frankness.

In brief, M. Burnouf sees in the public *indifference* the first obstacle in the Society's way. "Indifference born from weariness; weariness of the inability of religions to improve social life, and the ceaseless spectacle of rites and ceremonies which the priest never explains." Men demand today "scientific formulæ stating laws of nature, whether physical or moral. . . ." And this indifference the Society must encounter; "its name, also, adding to its difficulties: for the word *Theosophy* has no meaning for the people, and, at best, a very vague one for the learned." "It seems to imply a personal god," M. Burnouf thinks, adding: "Whoever says personal god, says creation and miracle," and he concludes that "the Society would do better to become frankly Buddhist or to cease to exist."

With this advice of our friendly critic it is rather difficult to agree. He has evidently grasped the lofty ideal of primitive Buddhism, and rightly sees that this ideal is identical with that of the T. S. But he has not yet learned the lesson of its history, nor perceived that to graft a young and healthy shoot on to a branch which has lost—less than any other, yet much of—its inner vitality, could not but be fatal to the new growth. The very essence of the position taken up by the T. S. is that it asserts and maintains the truth common to all religions; the truth which is true and undefiled by the concretions of ages of human passions and needs. But though Theosophy means Divine Wisdom, it implies nothing resembling belief in a personal god. It is *not* "the wisdom of God," but *divine* wisdom. The The-

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NOTE.—This concludes an article which appeared in *Lucifer* for August, 1888.

osophists of the Alexandrian Neo-Platonic school believed in "gods" and "demons" and in one *impersonal* ABSOLUTE DEITY. To continue:

> Our contemporary habits of life [says M. Burnouf] are not severe; they tend year by year to grow more gentle, but also more boneless. The moral stamina of the men of today is very feeble; the ideas of good and evil are not, perhaps, obscured, but the *will* to act rightly lacks energy. What men seek above all is pleasure and that somnolent state of existence called comfort. Try to preach the sacrifice of one's possessions and of oneself to men who have entered on this path of selfishness! You will not convert many. Do we not see the doctrine of the "struggle for life" applied to every function of human life? This formula has become for our contemporaries a sort of revelation, whose pontiffs they blindly follow and glorify. One may say to them, but in vain, that one must share one's last morsel of bread with the hungry; they will smile and reply by the formula: "the struggle for life." They will go further: they will say that in advancing a contrary theory, you are yourself struggling for your existence and are not disinterested. How can one escape from this sophism, of which all men are full today? . . .
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> This doctrine is certainly the worst adversary of Theosophy, for it is the most perfect formula of egoism. It seems to be based on scientific observation, and it sums up the moral tendencies of our day. . . . Those who accept it and invoke justice are in contradiction with themselves; those who practice it and who put God on their side are blasphemers. But those who disregard it and preach charity are considered wanting in intelligence, their kindness of heart leading them into folly. If the T. S. succeeds in refuting this pretended law of the "struggle for life" and in extirpating it from men's minds, it will have done in our day a miracle greater than those of Sakyamouni and of Jesus.

And this miracle the Theosophical Society *will* perform. It will do this, not by disproving the relative existence of the law in question, but by assigning to it its due place in the harmonious order of the universe; by unveiling its true meaning and nature and by showing that this *pseudo* law is a "pretended" law indeed, as far as the human family is concerned, and a fiction of the most dangerous kind. "Self-preservation," on these lines, is indeed and in truth a sure, if a slow, suicide, for it is a policy of mutual homicide, because men by descending to its practical application among themselves, merge more and more by a retrograde reinvolution into the animal kingdom. This is what the "struggle for life" is in reality, even on the purely materialistic lines of political economy. Once that this axiomatic truth is proved to all men; the same instinct of self-preservation only directed into its true channel will make them turn to *altruism*—as their surest policy of salvation.

It is just because the real founders of the Society have ever recognized the wisdom of truth embodied in one of the concluding paragraphs of M. Bournouf's excellent article, that they have provided against that terrible emergency in their fundamental teachings. The "struggle for existence" applies only to the physical, never to the moral plane of being. Therefore when the author warns us in these awfully truthful words:

> Universal charity will appear out of date; the rich will keep their wealth and will go on accumulating more; the poor will become impoverished in proportion, until the day when, propelled by hunger, they will demand bread, not of theosophy but of revolution. Theosophy shall be swept away by the hurricane. . . . "

The Theosophical Society replies: *"It surely will, were we to follow out his well-meaning advice, yet one which is concerned but with the lower plane."* It is not the policy of self-preservation, not the welfare of one or another personality in its finite and physical form that will or can ever secure the desired object and screen the Society from the effects of the social "hurricane" to come; but only the weakening of the feeling of separateness in the units which compose its chief element. And such a weakening can only be achieved by a process of *inner enlightenment.* It is not violence that can ever insure bread and comfort for all; nor is the kingdom of peace and love, of mutual help and charity and "food for all," to be conquered by a cold, reasoning, diplomatic policy. It is only by the close brotherly union of men's inner SELVES, of soul-solidarity, of the growth and development of that feeling which makes one suffer when one thinks of the suffering of others, that the reign of Justice and equality for all can ever be inaugurated. This is the first of the three fundamental objects for which the Theosophical Society was established, and called the "Universal Brotherhood of Man," without distinction of *race, color or creed.*

When men will begin to realize that it is precisely that ferocious personal selfishness, the chief motor in the "struggle for life," that lies at the very bottom and is the one sole cause of human starvation; that it is that other—national egoism and vanity which stirs up the States and rich individuals to bury enormous capitals in the unproductive erection of gorgeous churches and temples and the support of a swarm of social drones called Cardinals and Bishops, the true parasites on the bodies of their subordinates and their flocks—that they will try to remedy this universal evil by a healthy change of policy. And this salutary revolution can be *peacefully* accomplished only by the Theosophical Society and its teachings.

This is little understood by M. Burnouf, it seems, since while striking the true key-note of the situation elsewhere he ends by saying:

> The Society will find allies, if it knows how to take its place in the civilized world today. Since it will have against it all the positive cults, with the exception perhaps of a few dissenters and bold priests, the only other course open to it is to place itself in accord with the men of science. If its dogma of charity is a complementary doctrine which it furnishes to science, the society will be obliged to establish it on scientific data, under pain of remaining in the regions of sentimentality. The oft-repeated formula of the struggle for life is true, but not universal; it is true for the plants; it is less true for the animals in proportion as we climb the steps of the ladder, for the law of sacrifice is seen to appear and to grow in importance; in man, these two laws counter-balance one another, and the law of sacrifice, which is that of charity, tends to assume the upper hand, through the empire of the reason. It is reason which, in our societies, is the source of right, of justice, and of charity; through it we escape the inevitableness of the struggle for life, moral slavery, egoism and barbarism, in one word, that we escape from what Sakyamouni poetically called the power and the army of Mâra.

And yet our critic does not seem satisfied with this state of things but advises us by adding as follows:

> If the Theosophical Society [he says] enters into this order of ideas and knows how to make them its fulcrum, it will quit the limbus of inchoate thought and will find its place in the modern world; remaining none the less faithful to its Indian origin and to its principles. It may find allies; for if men are weary of the symbolical cults, unintelligible to their own teachers, yet men of heart (and they are many) are weary also and terrified at the egoism and the corruption, which tend to engulf our civilization and to replace it by a learned barbarism. Pure Buddhism possesses all the breadth that can be claimed from a doctrine at once religious and scientific. Its tolerance is the cause why it can excite the jealousy of none. At bottom, it is but the proclamation of the supremacy of reason and of its empire over the animal instincts, of which it is the regulator and the restrainer. Finally it has itself summed up its character in two words which admirably formulate the law of humanity, science and virtue.

And this formula the society has expanded by adopting that still more admirable axiom: *"There is no religion higher than truth."*

At this juncture we shall take leave of our learned, and perhaps, too kind critic, to address a few words to Theosophists in general.

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Has our Society, as a whole, deserved the flattering words and notice bestowed upon it by M. Burnouf? How many of its individual

members, how many of its branches, have carried out the precepts contained in the noble words of a Master of Wisdom, as quoted by our author from No. 3 of LUCIFER? "He who does not practice" this and the other *"is no Theosophist,"* says the quotation. Nevertheless, those who have never shared even their superfluous—let alone their last morsel—with the poor; those who continue to make a difference in their hearts between a colored and a white brother; as all those to whom malicious remarks against their neighbors, uncharitable gossip and even slander under the slightest provocation, are like heavenly dew on their parched lips—call and regard themselves as *Theosophists!*

It is certainly not the fault of the minority of *true* Theosophists, who do try to follow *the path* and who make desperate efforts to reach it, if the majority of their fellow members do not. It is not to them therefore that this is addressed, but to those who, in their fierce love of Self and their vanity, instead of trying to carry out the original programme to the best of their ability, sow broadcast among the members the seeds of dissension; to those whose personal vanity, discontentment and love of power, often ending in ostentation, give the lie to the original programme and to the Society's motto.

Indeed, these original aims of the FIRST SECTION of the Theosophical Society under whose advice and guidance the second and third merged into one were first founded, can never be too often recalled to the minds of our members.[4] The Spirit of these aims is clearly embodied in a letter from one of the Masters quoted in the "Occult World," on pages 71 and 73. Those Theosophists then,—who in the course of time and events would, or have, departed from those original aims, and instead of complying with them have suggested new policies of administration from the depths of their inner consciousness, *are not true to their pledges.*

"But we have always worked on the lines originally traced to us" —some of them proudly assert.

"You have not" comes the reply from those who know more of the true Founders of the T. S. *behind the scenes* than they do—or ever will if they go on working in this mood of Self-illusion and self-sufficiency.

What are the lines traced by the "Masters"? Listen to the authentic words written by one of them in 1880 to the author of the "Occult World":

> . . . "To our minds these motives sincere and worthy of every serious consideration *from the worldly standpoint,* appear *selfish.* . . .

[4] *Vide* Rules in the 1st vol. of the "Theosophist," pp. 179 and 180.

> They are selfish, because you must be aware that the chief object of the Theosophical Society is *not so much to gratify individual aspirations as to serve our fellow men* . . . and in our view the highest aspirations for the welfare of humanity become tainted with selfishness, if in the mind of the philanthropist, there lurks the shadow of a desire *for self-benefit, or a tendency to do injustice even there where these exist unconsciously to himself.* Yet, you have ever discussed, but to put down, the idea of a Universal Brotherhood, questioned its usefulness, and advised to remodel the Theosophical Society on the principle of a college for the special study of occultism. . . ."—(*"Occult World,"* p. 72.)

But another letter was written, also in 1880, which is not only a direct reproof to the Theosophists who neglect the main idea of Brotherhood, but also an anticipated answer to M. Emile Burnouf's chief argument. Here are a few extracts from it. It was addressed again to those who sought to make away with the "sentimental title," and make of the Society but an arena for "cup-growing and astral bell-ringing":

> ". . . In view of the ever-increasing triumph and, at the same time, misuse of free thought and liberty, how is the combative natural instinct of man to be restrained from inflicting hitherto unheard-of cruelties, enormities, tyranny, injustice, if not through the soothing influence of a Brotherhood, and of the practical application of Buddha's esoteric doctrines? . . . Buddhism is the surest path to lead men towards the one esoteric truth. As we find the world now, whether Christian, Mussulman, or Pagan, justice is disregarded and honour and mercy both flung to the winds. In a word, how, since that the main objects of the Theosophical Society are misinterpreted by those who are most willing to serve us personally, are we to deal with the rest of mankind, with that curse known as 'the struggle for life,' which is the real and most prolific parent of most woes and sorrows, and all crimes? Why has that struggle become the almost universal scheme of the universe? We answer: because no religion, with the exception of Buddhism, has hitherto taught a practical contempt for this earthly life, while each of them, always with that one solitary exception, has through its hells and damnations inculcated the greatest dread of death. Therefore do we find that 'struggle for life' raging most fiercely in Christian countries, most prevalent in Europe and America. It weakens in pagan lands, and is nearly unknown among Buddhist populations. . . . Teach the people to see that life on this earth, even the happiest, is but a burden and an illusion, that it is but our own Karma, the cause producing the effect, that is our own judge, our saviour in future lives—and the great struggle for life will soon lose its intensity. . . . The world in general and Christendom especially left

for two thousand years to the regime of a personal God, as well as its political and social systems based on that idea, has now proved a failure. If Theosophists say: 'We have nothing to do with all this, the lower classes and inferior races [those of India for instance, in the conception of the British] cannot concern us and must manage as they can,' what becomes of our fine professions of benevolence, reform, etc.? Are these professions a mockery? and, if a mockery, can ours be the true path? . . . Should we devote ourselves to teaching a few Europeans, fed on the fat of the land, many of them loaded with the gifts of blind fortune, the rationale of bell-ringing, cup-growing, spiritual telephone, etc., etc., and leave the teeming millions of the ignorant, of the poor and the despised, the lowly and the oppressed, to take care of themselves, and of their hereafter, the best they know how? Never! Perish rather the Theosophical Society . . . than that we should permit it to become no better than an academy of magic and a hall of Occultism. That we, the devoted followers of the spirit incarnate of absolute self-sacrifice, of philanthropy and divine kindness as of all the highest virtues attainable on this earth of sorrow, the man of men, Gautama Buddha, should ever allow the Theosophical Society to represent the embodiment of selfishness, to become the refuge of the few with no thought in them for the many, is a strange idea. . . . And it is we, the humble disciples of the perfect Lamas, who are expected to permit the Theosophical Society to drop its noblest title, that of the Brotherhood of Humanity, to become a simple school of Psychology. No! No! our brothers, you have been labouring under the mistake too long already. Let us understand each other. He who does not feel competent enough to grasp the noble idea sufficiently to work for it, need not undertake a task too heavy for him. . . .

"To be true, religion and philosophy must offer the solution of every problem. That the world is in such a bad condition morally is a conclusive evidence that none of its religions and philosophies—those of the civilized races less than any other—have ever possessed the TRUTH. The right and logical explanations on the subject of the problems of the great dual principles, right and wrong, good and evil, liberty and despotism, pain and pleasure, egotism and altruism, are as impossible to them now as they were 1880 years ago. They are as far from the solution as they ever were, but. . . .

"To these there must be somewhere a consistent solution, and if our doctrines will show their competence to offer it, then the world will be the first one to confess, that ours must be the true philosophy, the true religion, the true light, which gives truth and nothing but the TRUTH. . . ."

And this TRUTH is not Buddhism, but esoteric BUDHISM. "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. . . ."

MAKERS OF THE AGE

SO far has man journeyed from the forgotten innocence of humanity's childhood that all reference to that bright age or to a kindred time to come is dismissed as idle and improbable dreaming. Yet this "dream" was sufficiently vivid to ancient peoples of historic times for them in wistful song to long for its return. Now, the nature of such a period eludes the imaginative flight of even lofty minds, and the dream lacks substance. In this materializing age, the background of the drama enacted and the material advances secured are all that is seen, while the actors, those who alone can make of any age a heaven or hell, are overlooked. In consequence, magnificent but foolish utopias are described by those who imagine that human nature is molded by environment. But if ideal "conditions" are the first essential, have they ever been far off? The earth has ever been generous of her offerings, so that none need ever want, but human greed declared another order should prevail. The living spirit of an ideal age is alone to be recovered by examining the hearts of men and their relationships with others.

The abyss between the Kali and the Satya Yug of purity lies solely in the concepts men hold regarding their kinship with other men. The dark age, characterized by doubting, suspicious minds, the rarity of true friendships, the chaos of the household life, and by racial hatreds and fratricidal wars, indicates the heresy of separateness in every quarter. Reverse the picture. Recall the noblest character met or heard of. Conjure up the picture of a civilization composed of individuals of like nobility. Could words record the glory of such an age? When the frailty and pettiness of our neighbors is viewed, to say nothing of our own shortcomings, it appears a hopeless task so to transform human nature that it will become godlike. But these very beings are *now* gods, albeit gods in disguise, and the sooner they are apprised of the fact, the sooner will they act as becomes their true nature. Replace with true ideas the separative notions dividing men, arouse the desire and will to translate these verities into communal life, and the Real Man will be unveiled, a universal panacea obtained. When shall the Golden Age return? "Not before humanity as a whole, feels the need of it," said H. P. B. To cultivate that feeling is our work.

For enduring results, our energies must be persistently and unwaveringly directed to the great objective, striving ever to make the vision of the goal more real and vital. The arrow shot forth

when eye is not on target, can never hit the mark. Nor should lesser ends absorb our attention first. "We ought to set up a high ideal at which to aim, for a low one gives a lower result at the expense of the same effort."

By straining the sight to the far gone past or distant future, the bright age we yearn for will not be disclosed. The Golden Age has never died. What else is the Great Lodge of Elder Brothers, from whose ranks have proceeded all humanity's Sacred Heroes and Teachers? As They are the bridge over which the Lower Self can span the chasm separating it from the Higher Self, in like manner, They are the Antaskarana linking this transition period with a better age. Dwelling on the nature of that Holy Lodge, on the relationship of each member to the body corporate, whose single will is said to keep the world in being, and the establishment of the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity may be recognized as the most practical endeavor in the world.

To the question, "what class of Egos would bring in the Golden Age," Mr. Crosbie answered: "The class *we now represent,* for we must have lived in the Golden Age." Consider also what a Buddha, a single man, has done to revolutionize the lives of the multitudes who lived in Asia. Great things are possible to those who persist with the desire to serve alive in their hearts. Who can set limits if we unite and work as one mind and heart? Where the throbbing pulse beat of compassion is concerned, who can say, thus far and no farther shalt thou go?

The Unifying Self

We each of us furnish to the angel who stands in the sun, a single observation. . . . We forget what we have been, drugged by the sleepy bowl of the Present. But when a lively chord in the soul is struck, when the windows for a moment are unbarred, the long and varied past is recovered. We recognize it all; we are no more brief, ignoble creatures; we seize our immortality and bind together the related parts of our secular being. —Charles Emerson.

STUDIES IN KARMA

The Circling Tides of Time

The first 5000 years of *Kali Yuga* will end between the years 1897 and 1898. This *Yuga* began about 3102 years before the Christian era, at the time of Krishna's death. As 1897-98 are not far off, the scientific men of today will have an opportunity of seeing whether the close of the five-thousand-year cycle will be preceded or followed by any convulsions or great changes political, scientific or physical, or all of these combined. . . .

Individuals and nations in definite streams return in regularly recurring periods to the earth, and thus bring back to the globe the arts, the civilization, the very persons who once were on it at work. And as the units in nation and race are connected together by invisible strong threads, large bodies of such units moving slowly but surely all together reunite at different times and emerge again and again together into a new race and new civilization as the cycles roll their appointed rounds. Therefore the souls who made the most ancient civilizations will come back and bring the old civilization with them in idea and essence. . . .

The length of the individual reïncarnation cycle for the general mass of men is fifteen hundred years, and this in its turn gives us a large historical cycle related closely to the progress of civilization. For as the masses of persons return from *devachan,* it must follow that the Roman, the Greek, the old Aryan and other Ages will be seen again and can to a very great extent be plainly traced. But man is also affected by astronomical cycles because he is an integral part of the whole, and these cycles mark the periods when mankind as a whole will undergo a change. . . . —*The Ocean of Theosophy.*

"Arise, then, O Atlanteans, and repair the mischief done so long ago!" (William Q. Judge, Theosophy I, 482.)

THE incumbent President of the United States once remarked "this generation has a rendezvous with destiny." One wonders whether, given a real vision of the scope and nature of the destinies involved, he would not either have said much more—or remained silent.

The universality of the law of cycles—a Theosophical fundamental—is an idea easy to grasp in its broadest outlines; in some of its implications, beyond any but the vastest comprehension; possibly, in its ultimates, beyond any embodied mind at all.

In its purely mechanical aspect, the rotation of the earth about its axis, its movement around the sun, the movement of the sun around its own cosmic center, the movement of that center about still another, *ad infinitum,* beguiles the mind with an immediate and easily grasped phenomenon of everyday life, only to lead it at last to the brink of infinitudes. When the perturbations and local disturbances due to other systems in the neighborhood are added to the theoretically perfect original ellipses, the immediate problem itself becomes very difficult. Astronomers can easily solve the motion of two bodies about their common center; no thoroughly satisfactory solution for the mutual influences of even three bodies has yet been devised. Yet the motions in the solar system can be *approximated* to a degree practical enough for use.

Even so, did we find ourselves members of a nation reincarnated from fifteen hundred years past, with only one other, a neighbor, friend, or foe of that period, to deal with, the forecasting of destiny would be relatively simple. There are now, as there were then, scores of groups of Egos involved; we are in the midst of a crisis in which much just Karma is being precipitated upon nations, masses of individuals, but in which, by greed, fear, hatred, folly, and sometimes noble action, new Karma, good and bad, is being generated. Unlike a natural cataclysm, which produces no new Karma in the act of balancing old, a war always brings with it a host of new and bad causes; instead of clearing the situation, it more often leads to heavier impending debts for all concerned. Thus, even if the same individuals of the past cycle were in each case concerned in an apparently exact repetition of the old situation, there would still be great differences in outcome, because of altered motivations and changed degrees of moral responsibility.

It is well that these obscurities be remembered; otherwise the appalling similarity of the present situation to that of the Fifth Century, and the equally appalling outcome of that crisis, might paralyze hope.

Fifteen hundred years ago the crisis of the 5,000 year cycle was still far off; far, also, the drawing together of the old Atlantean tribes, long separated in various climes, into America for a vaster destiny than any seen in the Europe of the last 2,500 years. The caliber of the intelligence residing behind the Theosophical Movement, which was able to penetrate these Karmic complexities and unearth the following forecast, may be appreciated but hardly yet understood:

> . . . man is himself his own saviour as his own destroyer; . . . he need not accuse heaven and the gods, fates and providence, of the apparent injustice that reigns in the midst of humanity. But let him rather remember and repeat this bit of Grecian wisdom which warns man to forbear accusing *That* which
>
> 'Just though mysterious, leads us on unerring
> Through ways unmarked from guilt to punishment'
>
> —which are now the ways and the high road on which move onward the great European nations. The western Aryans had every nation and tribe like their eastern brethren of the fifth race, their Golden and their Iron ages, their period of comparative irresponsibility, or the Satya age of purity, while now several of them have reached their Iron age, the *Kali Yuga,* an age *black with horrors.* This state will last . . . until we begin acting from within instead of ever following impulses from without . . . Until then the only palliative is union and harmony—a Brotherhood in *actu* and *altruism* not simply in name. (*The Secret Doctrine* I, 643.)

The appearance of things shows that the fifteen hundred year cycle is casting the mold of events faithfully, for a long initial stage of the reckoning. Therefore let us examine the shape of things at that time.

The fall of the Roman empire has always been a prize case-history to those interested in the pathology of imperialism; it is especially valuable, partly because unusually well detailed and documented, and partly because of its intimate connection with the individual Karma of each one of us in Western lands. But in general form it is only one more example of a cycle as relentless and well-defined as that of cancer.

An empire grows like a banyan tree; during the period of its extreme expansion there become visible the spores of dry rot at its heart; as its branches cover the world, the center becomes a hollow shell, and disappears from sight, while its offshoots gradually fill the pages of history with their own briefer cycles. Imperial expansion is hailed by its instigators as a symbol of growth and vigor. In reality, it is a symptom of mortal disease—national elephantiasis. The United States as an independent nation may be said to have suffered from it at a certain stage; as a youth suffers unknowingly inherited atavistic tendencies, bearing them through the years without inconvenience, yet as a potential weakness in time of moral stress. The Karma of our extermination of the Indians, of Negro slavery, the shrewd "fifth column" work by which Texas and New Mexico were acquired, the jingoism of the Spanish war, may not be fatal wounds, but we are now suffering their effects in a hundred

unrecognized ways. The greater danger is that in some future time—possibly not so far in the future—we may embrace the fatal disease of a *real* imperialism under the guise of "duty"—its unvarying mask.

Of especial interest to all Americans should be the curious manner in which the Byzantine or Eastern Roman Empire separated from the Western, and the vicissitudes which followed. At the time of greatest Roman expansion, it was found necessary to form a secondary center of control because of the great areas involved. Byzantium, later Constantinople, became the center of the Prefectures of the East. The quasi-independent government thus formed led easily to the division of the empire by Theodosius between his sons, Arcadius and Honorius, 395 A. D. The old Empire in its Western phase had long since ceased to be a republic, though retaining some republican forms. There was a pretext of keeping them up in Byzantium, but the East in the very act of becoming independent, also carried the vices of its parent still farther into imperialistic dictatorship. Nevertheless there was a strange vigor in this new Empire, despite its apparent decadence. For a thousand years it maintained its independent existence against a host of enemies. The government finally became the most elaborate the world had ever seen, operating under the titular headship of Emperors who got their power indifferently by popular acclaim, military coups, adoption by predecessors, heredity, and now and then plain assassination.

Palace politics polluted the life of the nation throughout; it was more important to get the ear of the emperor than to be able or honest, and the life was eaten out of the people by taxes, necessary to maintain the host of governmental parasites ensconced in competitive bureaus incessantly engaged in struggles for power and prestige.

At certain stages the life of the capital centered about the games and race tracks, and mass riots of imposing proportions were the order of the day. (One of them cost 30,000 lives, and devastated the better part of the city.) At the same time, art and literature flourished; religion, though a Christianity becoming steadily more artificial, partook for a long time of beneficial influences bequeathed by Hypatia and her kind, and never reached the ferocity of the Western "conversions," which found their fullest fitting expression at last in the Inquisition.

A remarkable feature of the Eastern Empire was the fraternity of races it included. Roman, Greek, Egyptian, Oriental, and Germanic elements fused and flourished; the outlander had as good an

opportunity as anyone else, and in fact, the life of the Empire was once saved by an alien, an Isaurian, who seized power from an incompetent predecessor in time of disaster. One may surmise that the power of the Empire arose from this fraternization of different talents and capacities; its ills, from so many of them having decadent backgrounds.

During the time when Byzantium was first establishing its far-flung power, the old Roman Empire reached that stage where a nation, rotted out by ease and sensualism based upon exploitation, becomes a hollow shell, almost unsuspected except by a few philosophers. The Germanic tribes had moved out from their defensive positions in the Northern forests, and had gradually over-run most of the northerly provinces—often welcomed by agrarian communities who had reached the point where any change seemed for the better.

In the latter part of the fourth century, Rome had become so weak that she had begun to appease the Germans by giving them office, wealth, and military power; a process which augmented their appetites. These encroachments and disturbances first became most serious to the Eastern section of the Empire; but it was that section which threw them off as it became independent, and the Western that finally succumbed. The struggles with the Germans, at first by the allied Empires, finally became a prolonged attempt by the Eastern Empire to rescue the remains of the Western from them. The West lost Africa to the Germans in the early part of the fifth century; lost Italy and Gaul (modern France) at the same time to the Huns. Sometimes the Germanic rulers who established themselves amid the ruined glories of Rome were independent; sometimes they were temporarily brought to heel by the Eastern Emperor, and rendered tribute; in general, the period from the fifth to the sixth century was marked by intermittent but losing struggles to regain the western lands. For a brief period under Justinian this was actually accomplished, but the Karmic accumulation was too great to maintain the Roman hegemony. The Eastern Empire has sometimes been accused of preventing the new Teutonic occupants of the old Roman territory from settling down and becoming civilized, through these incessant feuds; and thus of making a major contribution to the onset of the Dark Ages in Europe.

By the end of the sixth century, Byzantium found itself in trouble —mostly by its own fault—first with Persia, then with Islam, then with Russia. For many generations futile wars wasted both Byzantium and Persia. Persia was finally beaten, but Islam was at hand at once. This next struggle lasted intermittently until the siege of Con-

stantinople, following disastrous civil wars, ended the Empire in 1453, thirty-nine years before a new world was discovered—the land destined for the home of the founders of the Empire, then about to return from their Devachans, drawing with them old allies and enemies.

The situation which arose in the middle of the fifth century is more than worthy of note; not only as corresponding to our time, but also to our circumstances. It marked the first large-scale collision between the Fourth and Fifth Race stocks in comparatively modern times—between the Occidental and the Mongolian.

The Huns originated in Central Asia and became a many-branched race, some tribes of which remained strictly Mongolian, while some became highly hybridized. The modern Turk, Magyar, and Finn are some of their descendents. Apparently they presented the phenomenon now so troubling the world—that of a rapidly increasing, vigorous people finding themselves cramped on insufficient land. They were a nomad and herding people, and their first unrest seems to have begun with drought. Their wanderings brought them in contact with decadent Rome and China, and the rising glories of Byzantium, which aroused at once their contempt and their avarice.

In the middle of the fifth century they became an increasing threat to the Roman Empires, which were contending at the same time with the Germanic tribes. The fiercest of these tribes, the Angles, were at the same time beginning the invasion of Britain, which had been left to its own devices by Roman weakness. Genseric, the Germanic Vandal, while fighting a coalition of the two Emperors, induced Attila, leader of the Huns, to attack them. Attila made an onslaught on the Eastern Empire which destroyed seventy Byzantine cities and brought him to the gates of the Capital. This forced the Emperor, Theodosius II, to make a purchased peace. The embassy which Theodosius sent to Attila to settle peace terms included an honest ambassador, Maximin, and an "under-cover" emissary, Vigilius, whose mission was to secure the poisoning of Attila, if possible. Attila discovered this, said nothing, sent home the honest ambassador with presents, and paid his respects to Theodosius in a special mission, the upshot of which was the extraction of an enormous ransom to save the rest of the Empire from devastation. The Empire became temporarily tributary to Attila. In 451 Attila made a devastating attack on the dying Western Empire, but was defeated by a combination of Romans, French, and Germans—all awake to the insanity of continuing their own quarrels in the face of the Oriental menace—and died in 453. Thereafter the Hunnish power rapidly vanished from Europe.

The Huns came very near to over-running Europe, largely because of the typical white race contempt for them as "savages." True, they practically lived in the saddle and ate raw meat often carried under their saddle-flaps; but Attila's army had an efficient divisional organization and a knowledge of tactics equal to the best of the day; facts which dawned upon the Occidentals almost too late.

Hunnish history was different in the Orient. One branch of Huns, the Ephthalites, having already been in conflict with the rising power of Persia for generations, descended on India in 470, plundering and committing terrible atrocities. The worst of them, Mihiragula, whose favorite amusement was rolling elephants down mountains, was defeated by the Indian princes in 528. Their homeland was invaded by an alliance of Turks and Persians in 565, and they vanished as had their relatives a century before.

In the Orient, China was beginning to fall into somewhat the same disintegration as had Rome. By the fourth century a dynasty of Huns reigned in Shansi, and also held much of Siberia. A mixed reigning family arose, which ultimately conquered all of China. This Suy dynasty, curiously enough, began a renaissance of China itself, carried to a bright epoch by its successor, the Tang dynasty. Not least of the glories of the latter was the ascendency of Buddhism. This was contemporaneous with the very darkest age of Europe.

Now, how shall we identify this confused mélange of the past with the peoples of today? Who now are the Romans, the Byzantines, the Persians, the Huns, the Chinese, the Teutons? Will they act only as they acted before, thus continuing to spin the same weary wheel—as indeed they have begun? Have enough of them inwardly learned so that at the right prompting when the time comes, they will move energetically toward a *true* "new order" emerging with purification from seas of blood and tears? Or will the augmentation of hatreds run apace with the augmentation of the power of destruction, and the major part of the world revert to a new Dark Age more savage still than the old?

Madame Blavatsky stated that we were at the beginning of a cycle, "at the end of which not a few accounts would be drawn and squared between the races." Could we correctly estimate the rights and wrongs of the past millennia, we might have a better idea as to the direction in which the squaring will take place.

H. P. B. made two other prophecies: that Western civilization may sink in a sea of horror unparalleled in history; that the twenty-first century may be a heaven compared with the nineteenth. They

were both conditional—"*unless* Theosophy prevails"; "*if* Theosophy prevails."

Nations and individuals may dream that if "our side" wins, an eternal end will be put to war by that fact alone. Already are growing the visible seeds of new alliances, new conflicts, new enmities, to spring out of the very soil of victory, unless a clearer light dawns. Upon the fall of Carthage, Cato announced in the Roman Senate that war was ended forever, now that the one great aggressor power was exterminated. In 1918 that prediction was repeated in reincarnated Senates—those of Britain, France, Italy and America.

Where, now, is the visible hope? American politics, American luxury, irresponsibility, and sensuality are those of Byzantium; we chatter as idly in the market-place as did our ancient forebears. Theodore Roosevelt recognized a generation ago the recrudescence in America of these evils by characterizing our own plutocrats and tycoons as "malefactors of great wealth," our scholars as "Byzantine logothetes." But the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States are not Byzantine documents; nor was the character of Lincoln that of a Constantine or Justinian.

The greeds and exploitations of our modern great empires have been as brutal as those of Rome; but the people had to be led to their support by protestations of high motives and the pretended obligations of the "white man's burden." The raw, callous, unashamed greed of the ancients was not enough this time. Today the people, in no matter what land, can be brought to wage war only by being made to hope that thus they will end war itself—however delusive the dream of accomplishing such an end in such a way.

The present-day picture, then, is that of peoples repeating the old cycle, but who have really learned something by it, however obscurely realized as yet. The greater scope of disasters is due to new experiences, of which the lesson is only now being learned—the lesson of the power and prostitution of material science. We are so dazed by its magnification of horrors as to fail to recognize the old situation in its essentials.

The right solution requires knowledge; the responsibility is upon the holders of that knowledge, for upon none others can it rest. The fewer the holders of the light, the greater their responsibility. This is today's import and application of H. P. B.'s great mission, and of her dying "message to the American Theosophists."

FRIENDS OR ENEMIES IN THE FUTURE

THE fundamental doctrines of Theosophy are of no value unless they are applied to daily life. To the extent to which this application goes they become living truths, quite different from intellectual expressions of doctrine. The mere intellectual grasp may result in spiritual pride, while the living doctrine becomes an entity through the mystic power of the human soul. Many great minds have dwelt on this. Saint Paul wrote:

> Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

The Voice of the Silence, expressing the views of the highest schools of occultism, asks us to step out of the sunlight into the shade so as to make more room for others, and declares that those whom we help in this life will help us in our next one.

Buttresses to these are the doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation. The first shows that we must reap what we sow, and the second that we come back in the company of those with whom we lived and acted in other lives. St. Paul was in complete accord with all other occultists, and his expressions above given must be viewed in the light Theosophy throws on all similar writings. Contrasted with charity, which is love of our fellows, are all the possible virtues and acquirements. These are all nothing if charity be absent. Why? Because they die with the death of the uncharitable person; their value is naught, and that being is reborn without friend and without capacity.

This is of the highest importance to the earnest Theosophist who may be making the mistake of obtaining intellectual benefits but remains uncharitable. The fact that we are now working in the Theosophical movement means that we did so in other lives, must do so again, and, still more important, that those who are now with us will be reincarnated in our company on our next rebirth.

Shall those whom we now know or whom we are destined to know before this life ends be our friends or enemies, our aiders or obstructors in that coming life? And what will make them hostile or friendly to us then? Not what we shall say or do to and for them

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in the future life. For no man becomes your friend in a present life by reason of present acts alone. He was your friend, or you his, before in a previous life. Your present acts but revive the old friendship, renew the ancient obligation.

Was he your enemy before, he will be now even though you do him service now, for these tendencies last always more than three lives. They will be more and still more our aids if we increase the bond of friendship of today by charity. Their tendency to enmity will be one-third lessened in every life if we persist in kindness, in love, in charity now. And that charity is not a gift of money, but charitable thought for every weakness, to every failure.

Our future friends or enemies, then, are those who are with us and to be with us in the present. If they are those who now seem inimical, we make a grave mistake and only put off the day of reconciliation three more lives if we allow ourselves today to be deficient in charity for them. We are annoyed and hindered by those who actively oppose as well as others whose mere looks, temperament, and unconscious action fret and disturb us. Our code of justice to ourselves, often but petty personality, incites us to rebuke them, to criticise, to attack. It is a mistake for us to so act. Could we but glance ahead to next life, we would see these for whom we now have but scant charity crossing the plain of that life with ourselves and ever in our way, always hiding the light from us. But change our present attitude, and that new life to come would show these bores and partial enemies and obstructors helping us, aiding our every effort. For Karma may give them then greater opportunities than ourselves and better capacity.

Is any Theosophist who reflects on this so foolish as to continue now, if he has the power to alter himself, a course that will breed a crop of thorns for his next life's reaping? We should continue our charity and kindnesses to our friends whom it is easy to wish to help, but for those whom we naturally dislike, who are our bores now, we ought to take especial pains to aid and carefully toward them cultivate a feeling of love and charity. This adds interest to our Karmic investment. The opposite course, as surely as sun rises and water runs down hill, strikes interest from the account and enters a heavy item on the wrong side of life's ledger.

And especially should the whole Theosophical organization act on the lines laid down by St. Paul and *The Voice of the Silence*. For Karmic tendency is an unswerving law. It compels us to go on in this movement of thought and doctrine; it will bring back to reincarnation all in it now. Sentiment cannot move the law one inch; and

though that emotion might seek to rid us of the presence of these men and women we presently do not fancy or approve—and there are many such in our ranks for every one—the law will place us again in company with friendly tendency increased or hostile feeling diminished, just as we now create the one or prevent the other. It was the aim of the founders of the Society to arouse tendency to future friendship; it ought to be the object of all our members.

What will you have? In the future life, enemies or friends?

—EUSEBIO URBAN.

METHODS OF WORK

H. P. B. always said—following the rules laid down by high teachers—that no proposal for theosophical work should be rejected or opposed provided the proposer has the sincere motive of doing good to the movement and to his fellows. Of course that does not mean that distinctly bad or pernicious purposes are to be forwarded. Seldom, however, does a sincere theosophist propose such bad acts. But they often desire to begin some small work for the Society, and are frequently opposed by those who think the juncture unfavorable or the thing itself unwise. These objections always have at bottom the assumption that there is only one certain method to be followed. . . . Sometimes when a member who has not much capacity proposes an insignificant work in his own way, his fellows think it ought not to be done. But the true way is to bid good-speed to every sincere attempt to spread theosophy, even if you cannot agree with the method. As it is not your proposal, you are not concerned at all in the matter. You praise the desire to benefit; nature takes care of results. . . . Ramifying in every direction are the levers that move and bring about results, some of those levers—absolutely necessary for the greatest of results—being very small and obscure. They are all of them human beings, and hence we must carefully watch that by no word of ours the levers are obstructed. If we attend strictly to our own duty all will act in harmony, for the duty of another is dangerous for us. Therefore if any member proposes to spread the doctrines of theosophy in a way that seems wise to him, wish him success even if his method be one that would not commend itself to you for your own guidance.

—W. Q. J.

AMONG YOUTH-COMPANIONS

THE time for the special discussion on current problems had come again, but with no particular subject chosen at the previous meeting, and no newcomers present. After some tentative proposals, none of which sounded fruitful, Martinez spoke up: "Perhaps this may seem irrelevant as a current problem, but I have been thinking for some time that we should have some kind of a social gathering for the young people of the Lodge. It seems to me that congenial and good-sized parties, maybe with dancing, could be arranged. We could invite people who aren't in our study group. I don't know how you feel about it," he went on, "but I have felt that this aspect of life has been overlooked too much in the Lodge and over-emphasized too much in most organizations. There ought to be a 'happy medium'," he hopefully concluded.

"That's our subject!" exclaimed Janice, " 'the place of social life among Theosophists.' We ought to be able to produce some constructive ideas, even if we don't all agree on a 'program for action'."

The others nodded agreement.

"Well, to start the ball rolling," Alayne began, "I'll mention the case of a girl who used to come to quite a few of the meetings. After a month or so she came less and less, and now she doesn't come at all. She told me she was losing interest because Theosophists were such 'dull' people. 'They never have any fun,' she said, 'because their minds are always on "remote" planes.' Now I don't share her feeling, but I sometimes wonder if there isn't a little basis for that comment; although, to me, it doesn't seem to apply very much in U. L. T., especially since study groups like this one provide a *natural* social mingling. Do any of the rest of you think there is anything in the complaint that U. L. T. members are 'stuffy'?"

"I don't see how anyone could say that; that is, not anyone who actually knows some real Theosophists," said Dave. "Of course, that would mean a close association with them for a period of time, not just seeing them at a meeting once in a while. If people were really interested in Theosophy, they would soon find mutual interests or activities that could be shared with other workers. When we come down to it, the greatest bond of interest is the common ideal of devotion and work for Theosophy which expresses itself in many ways, besides drawing certain individuals closer together."

"Don't forget Associate Pathfinders," put in King. "That is an ideal activity for young people who like to combine friendly social intercourse with serious self-education and discussions in the light

of Theosophy. Almost always, those who complain about the lack of 'social life' in U. L. T. are people who haven't really tried to take advantage of the natural means of getting acquainted that the Lodge provides. Of course, Associate Pathfinders doesn't sponsor 'dances,' but the members do have an annual get-together, and an all-day outing, too. These occasions are particularly enjoyable because they are not spoiled by over-doing the petty side of social life."

Alayne, who was not an Associate, nodded musingly. "When you think it over," she said, "the Lodge or even Pathfinders could hardly arrange for dances and things like that without getting pretty deep into side issues. Besides, theosophists have enough personal problems to adjust without deliberately arranging the circumstances that so often create little personal situations."

"Even among Theosophists," she added, "where the ideal must be to consider everybody part of the same family, it seems to be natural that some people should be drawn closer together than others. Nobody can 'plan' things like that without causing trouble. One's social contacts should come about naturally."

"I think there is more to it," said Max thoughtfully. "If we had to have Lodge parties all the time, like Churches even, to hold members together, besides to keep them, then we surely have lost sight of our philosophy. We know from the Declaration that the Teaching should hold the members together."

"Yet," broke in Janice, "we must remember that a warm spirit of friendship and sympathy should be there, too, along with the Teaching. Both impress a newcomer to the Lodge. In other words, we have to exemplify our sincerity and devotion all the time in our attitude."

"Well, it doesn't seem to be a good idea to strain to 'put on' that attitude towards newcomers; it has to be a natural response called out by one's eagerness to be of service to others," Alayne commented.

At this point, Gail, silent so far, spoke up. "This general subject is closely related to a problem in my own mind—whether to join a sorority at college or not. I have heard quite a few points for and against them, but am still a little confused as to what attitude a Theosophist should take."

King, a fraternity man, found this a familiar question. "Fraternities," he said, "appear to me to be not altogether a waste, as some might think. In an ideal educational system they wouldn't even exist, but, in the one we have, I think fraternities may provide better methods of 'learning' than some of the courses. It depends on the

individual whether or not he can profit from the experience of belonging to a fraternity. It's even possible that fraternity life can make you more useful in future Theosophical work, because you learn directly about the states of mind induced by the present 'higher learning.' Living on intimate terms with a large enough group—as in a fraternity—helps you to understand better the different backgrounds and viewpoints of others: just why, for instance, some fellows have no greater end in view than a 'good time.' Then, too, you find a few who may be interested in *our* ideas and ideals—or at least in some of the applications of Theosophy."

"But, King," interrupted Gail, "you seem to ignore the basic set-up of those organizations. What about the methods they use in picking 'pledges' for a particular sorority or fraternity? How about all the social and personal distinctions, and even discrimination? Do the 'advantages' really compensate for the compromises you have to make?"

King smiled ruefully. "It's pretty bad in some ways, I'll have to admit. But I think that charge of discrimination can be over-emphasized. After all, you would not be chosen for that particular group if you did not have some affinities for those you contact there. And most important of all, *you* do not have to feel any 'exclusive' spirit. There you have an opportunity to set an example."

"There's certainly nothing wrong with picking your own friends," said Dave. "I think the mistake is made when you try to codify the basis for friendships in the admission rules of an organization. Frankly, I rebel at that."

"My main objection to sororities and fraternities has always been the awful social parties I hear you are obliged to participate in," said Janice. "You meet the drinking problem in quite a crude form, along with other kinds of unwholesomeness. Why should one subject himself to such untheosophical habits?"

"Who says you're subjecting yourself to those things?" responded King quickly. "Just because the rest of the crowd is doing it, doesn't mean you have to. Besides, I think you should make an effort at understanding why things are done before condemning those who do them. There, again, you can *be* a Theosophist. Sometimes fellows have wondered why I act as I do in certain situations, and even though they might not have fully agreed with all my explanations, they have had a respect for some of my reasons. Take drinking, for instance. Why think that you are not noticed when you refuse a cocktail or beer and order a soft drink? Your friends—and the

waitress, maybe—will notice. Perhaps it will not have an immediate effect, but they may sometimes remember, when seeing an intoxicated person making a fool of himself, that others can enjoy themselves without benefit of alcohol. When you take a firm stand on principles it *must* have some effect, even in a fraternity. Of course, your time is not altogether your own, if you undertake the 'obligations' of fraternity life. You have to keep up with a lot of events which tend to interfere with Theosophical work, although you can escape the more useless phases. So one would have to take that into consideration in making his choice, and be very sure he thought it worth the extra effort."

"Well," offered Dave, "you seem to have reached the conclusion that there is a place for social activities in the lives of Theosophists, which means we don't have to place ourselves in an ivory tower, 'away from it all,' as recluses in a monastery. I think so, too. We are not leading a double life by participating in recreational activities that are part of the curriculum of modern youth, so long as we maintain our Theosophical principles—that is, *act* like Theosophists."

"All that we have been talking about tonight recalls to mind the passage in the *Bhagavad-Gita* on the principle of *moderation* in eating and recreation, and in other things. That seems to be the keynote of our problem," said Alayne thoughtfully.

"Which sounds like a good note to end on," said King, looking at his watch.

"TO BE A PHILOSOPHER"

There are nowadays professors of philosophy, but not philosophers. . . . To be a philosopher is not merely to have subtle thoughts, nor even to found a school, but so to love wisdom as to live, according to its dictates, a life of simplicity, independence, magnanimity, and trust. It is to solve some of the problems of life, not only theoretically, but practically. —THOREAU.

PAIRS OF OPPOSITES

QUESTION: In the *Bhagavad-Gita* and elsewhere in Theosophical teaching "the pairs of opposites" are spoken of as omnipresent qualities of nature, or manifested life. *The Secret Doctrine* (II, 389) says: "There is nothing in the whole universe that has not two sides—the reverses of the same medal." Must everything have an opposite? Would a being who represented "perfect love of all creatures," such as a Buddha, be counterbalanced by an exact opposite?

Answer: To clarify the question it is necessary to consider carefully what is meant by the term "love," both in its common meaning and in the sense referred to above, for there is a qualitative difference between the two. The words love and hate usually signify states of feeling or emotion representing purely personal attraction or repulsion. If a being is at all capable of personal feeling, he must be capable of both love and hate, even though only one of the two may be observable at a given time. The being who "loves" perfectly in a personal sense is the personification of unselfishness. But there is a higher state to be reached than this virtue—selflessness. It is this state of mind which seems to be the distinguishing mark of the greatest souls, and there is a common intuitive recognition that it represents something essentially different from the development of unselfishness, for the unselfish man, by definition, is still *capable* of selfishness.

One who reaches a true state of selflessness, however, is spoken of as being "constitutionally incapable" of selfishness. In one sense this state has an "opposite," for in evolutionary process, where the free-will of self-conscious beings makes everything possible, a condition can be reached where *unselfishness* is impossible. This state, typified by beings who constitute the "dark forces of nature," is not a mere manifestation of human selfishness, for the ordinary selfish man is still capable of unselfishness—of love as of hate—even though selfish tendencies may temporarily dominate his life. Perfection in selfishness, like perfection in selflessness, is a state beyond the "pairs of opposites"—from either of which there is no return in this cycle of evolution.

Yet perfection in evil is a personal, *i.e., material,* state, while the perfection of selflessness is impersonal. Reality is impersonal, and those who have reached the state of selflessness have encompassed reality by their understanding. There can be only one ultimate

reality—*i.e.*, the actual nature of beings and of evolutionary law. Perception of this reality through selflessness is a state which has no exact opposite, so far as man is concerned. The man who is incapable of love, who is "perfected" in selfishness, can no longer be said to have a dual nature—is no longer man. He has no more incarnations in this cycle *as man* but only as a potent kama-rupa, while the truly perfected man is still a man, able to *feel* both the loves and hates of his fellows. For man there can be no opposite of a state encompassing reality; the only opposite of reality is non-reality or non-existence. Man, *as man,* cannot reach this state, for self-consciousness implies the ability to perceive *something* of reality. While in nature there are *forces* constituting the opposite of the forces generated by the selfless adept, there is no opposite to spiritual selflessness as a state attainable by man while still in possession of all of his "principles" as a self-conscious being.

THE UNITING GOAL

To be a man is, precisely, to be responsible. It is to feel shame at the sight of what seems to be unmerited misery. It is to take pride in a victory won by one's comrades. It is to feel, when setting one's stone, that one is contributing to the building of the world. . . .

Why should we hate one another? We all live in the same cause, are borne through life on the same planet, form the crew of the same ship. Civilizations may, indeed, compete to bring forth new syntheses, but it is monstrous that they should devour one another.

To set man free it is enough that we help one another to realize that there does exist a goal towards which all mankind is striving. Why should we not strive towards that goal together, since it is what unites us all? The surgeon pays no heed to the moanings of his patient: beyond that pain it is man he is seeking to heal. That surgeon speaks a universal language. The physicist does the same when he ponders those almost divine equations in which he seizes the whole physical universe from the atom to the nebula. Even the simple shepherd modestly watching his sheep under the stars would discover once he understood the part he was playing, that he was something more than a servant, was a sentinel. And each sentinel among men is responsible for the whole of the empire.

—ANTOINE DE SAINT-EXUPERY.

"CLOCK OF KARMA"

IF all our sufferings in this life are caused by the misdeeds of a former life, how can any combination of sidereal influences at birth affect our fate?

W. Q. J.—A thorough acquaintance with the doctrine of Karma and with what is actually claimed for Astrology by those qualified to speak, would result in an answer to this question. Astrology is not soothsaying nor card-reading; reading omens is soothsaying; reading cards is a form of divination: Astrology is neither of these. All that is claimed for it is that the whole assemblage of stars indicate, as being a vast machine or clockwork, just exactly what is the state or condition of any one spot in the whole mass. Is this any more absurd than to say that a watchmaker can tell from the movements of a watch just where the hands will be at any particular moment, and likewise from the hands alone where the different cogs and other parts are within? If common minds, and ignorant as well as venal practitioners of Astrology, make a stock of their imitations, wrong conceptions, and base uses of it, that is no reason why the FORUM should sweepingly denounce Astrology. As well denounce real Christianity because of the base coinage labelled with its name. Taking now the oft-made assertion that "Karma governs all worlds up to that of Brahma," we reply to the question that our Karma and the stars are inextricably linked together, for if we had no Karma there would for us be no stars. It is just because the Karma of any being at birth is fixed from his prior one that the great clockwork of the skies shows unerringly to the sage—but not to the dabbler nor to the modern abusers of Astrology—the Karma or present fate of the being. But if, as so often by even the best of Theosophists, we separate any part of our universe from any other portion, putting one under the influence of Karma and another not, then of course such questions as this one cannot be answered. The doctrines of the Wisdom-Religion are naught if not all-embracing, are useless and misleading if not applicable to the greatest as well as the very least of circumstances or worlds; and so we answer that not only do sidereal positions *indicate* our Karma, but even the very clouds, the wind, and the hour of day or night in which we may be born, do the same.

—*Theosophical Forum,* July, 1890.

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

THERE is no question of such complete interest to men, at some time of their lives, than that of what has happened to the beings whom they loved so dearly and who now are "dead." Even little children feel the emptiness of separation when that final curtain is rung down. And yet, very often, we find that excessive grief, and excessive praise for the person, the constant dwelling on the idea of loss and hardship resulting from his death, cause the well-spring of true feeling to dry in the hearts of those not attached to him now gone. Contrarily, we sometimes experience the profoundest sense of all that life means in the passing of one whom we knew only by reputation, and whose loss to us as individuals is not personal at all.

Death has its great importance because it sets a limit to our actions here on earth. It is because people do not really translate it into personal loss. "Why do I feel so badly? Why am I so moved?" Deep within, a spiritual release and utter relaxation come when we face the inevitable, when the natural is mixed with the divine and supernatural. Why do parents weep on witnessing the graduation of their sons and daughters from school? Why do some weep at weddings? It is not only that the old life is closed, but that a new one is beginning, with all the possibilities of life which bring responsibilities, keener joys, deeper sorrows, failures, success; and, through it all, that knowledge which is the gulf between youth and age. These new stages are all new births; they herald new beginnings. Those who have passed them first know well that there is no going back. We can never be the child that was, for we can never unknow all that life has taught us. We stand at a threshold.

So also, death precedes another entry into another life. The old life is through—all that it held of opportunities, used or wasted; opportunities to see life whole, to understand the feelings and rights of others, to act as wise and kindly beings; the divine gamble, turning up golden pennies all the time, or the cautious game, based on self-advancement, that ends in bitterness and crabbed old age. And we who witness the ending of a life, whether good or ill, know that a divine soul suffered and enjoyed, tried, became confused, learned, and so grew older. Because we are that same Self, we feel his life as though it were our own. We can for a moment stand on high, looking down on human life with pity, while our weeping is for Man, far more than it is for the individual or for ourselves.

The majority of Christians, so-called, are content to take from the teachings of Jesus a code of ethics, "for life," they say. "No one can know about death, but if we follow the beatitudes, that is enough to live by." The average Christian believes in death. The theosophist believes only in life. The average Christian worships the dead, and "things," more often than not, weigh more than the spirit for him. Theosophy, paradoxically, alone in the West accepts the entire doctrine of Jesus, and alone maintains that the immortality of man is no mere belief, but that the one great task for each individual to set for himself is self-consciously achieving it. If the kingdom of Heaven is within, then we must look within and study ourselves to discover the meaning of this immortal life.

What, then, is our inner life made up of? There is that center which we call myself, the "I" which we constantly use in conversation. I know, I don't know, I feel fine, I feel ill, I want this, I won't do that. The real center is not the feelings, it is not the wanting, the knowing, the desiring; IT is the One who experiences all these modes of action. When we feel that we know another being, what is it that we know? It is that center which we can touch to activity, which reacts to our words and actions, which understands our meanings, an inner core of sensitivity, by means of which the whole body acts as a unit. Imagine a body devoid of this co-ordinating, powerful, inner will; imagine arms and legs and eyes moving in opposite and haphazard directions. Would it be possible to contact the one within, unless the attention of the eyes were directed upon us, the hearing of the ears sent forward in our direction? The magic and mystery of the human body lies only in the fact that it is made to act sensibly toward a single object by means of the divine power within. Imagine the sense of touch reacting independently to the world, feeling or not feeling, not communicating the news to the inner guiding intelligence, the inner intelligence with no power to force the fingers to touch *this* rather than *that*.

The whole beauty and power and intelligence of the human body is that it does not see everything, it sees only what the man within directs the eyes to regard; it does not touch everything, but only that which lies within the scope of directed action; it tastes only that which has direct connection with the man's experience; it does not even react to all emotional and mental stimuli, but only to those of special interest through past experience. Nothing jumps from its lawful expected field of action in man, but all is of slow growth attained as the inner man directs his attention and concentration from one object to a related one. We do not fall asleep as farmers and

wake up as chemists, nor in our thinking do we jump from learning simple addition to a consideration of astronomical light years; we do not produce a beautiful picture without first drawing straight lines, spheres, and so on. It is not man's complicated body which was produced for him by a freak of nature, but it is the indwelling powerful spirit which has directed the whole of nature to produce forms suitable for greater and greater experience; which alone holds the form together, and which at death leaves that form, while the form falls apart.

Our bodies, then, are the "Temples of the Living God." Things, or forms, are the only relatively "dead" things, because sustained alone by the indwelling spirit. The spirit is never seen. All we see of others is their bodies, their facial expressions, which are but *signs* of intelligence. We do not see the intelligence itself. We live in a world of feeling, in a world of thinking, in a petty world of personal concerns, in a free world of high and noble ideas. The same man at times acts like a god, or like a demon. Every germ and every atom, is also a form of intelligence, or it could not respond to "environment." Though hydrogen is just a form of gas to us, on some inner plane is going on a process of special reaction, special contact, special change, appropriate to that degree of intelligence (or perception).

When the breath leaves the body at death, it leaves the physical world of form. But the real man must now see that all those ties made on the basis of body or objective life no longer need vivification. All of the actions which resulted from becoming lost in the *seeming* reality of earth-life—preoccupation with how to dress, how to act, what to say, that certain results of a material sort might come—all of this, at the moment of death, is re-evaluated. The whole life is now seen and understood from another level of vision, because if we are detached, we are not "involved." We see we were worshipping dead things. This spiritual vision is followed by the loosening of the bonds of earthly passions and desires from the real man, who quits the astral body on which the physical body hung, "as iron filings on a magnet." This astral is no longer a focus for the will of the divine being; it too begins to disintegrate, as did the physical, although it may hold for some time on its own plane the automatic habits, the patterns of speech, the physical memories of the being who once made them and is now through with them.

The spiritual being is now free—free of the body which involved it in earth life, free of the senses, free of earth strife, earth rivalry, earthly pettiness and weariness. Now, the soul may enjoy its memories of the real beings it knew on earth, in a present living spiritual sense.

The true love of friends and relatives is enhanced. Their spiritual qualities, their loyalty, their generosity, their kindness are all illuminated. The state of Devachan consists entirely of fulfilling psychic impulses of the nobler sort, of working out the ties of true and unselfish love in a way we could not do in earth life, blinded as were our eyes, and so limited our vehicle. All the impersonal aspirations in art, music, mathematics, the creative interpretation of life through literature, philosophy, or even of the dance, all these have full play in Devachan. Moreover, the power of the soul in Devachan to affect for good a loved one left on earth is known. The picture which the Devachanee creates of a loved one performing actions of nobility and wisdom may be felt by the one on earth, so that he may be impelled to nobler living. In certain cases, also, specific acts of protection may flow. But this is not a conscious process on the part of the one who is gone, nor for the one left behind. Men come back from the other shore refreshed, but with no memory of what went on in the land of sleep, save in rare and beautiful dreams. The "bridge" is mutual love.

The mediums who profess to reach our departed ones contact but the dead and empty shell, the astral body left behind in the astral limbo, and sometimes revivify it, as it becomes a focus for the magnetism of the medium. Mediums do not tell us what goes on on the other side, any more than the sleeping man, while he sleeps, can at the same time be awake and tell us what he feels in sleeping. The so-called "spirits of the dead" do no more than "verify" all the ideas held in waking life, the most trivial and personal details being taken as proof that they are spirits. For the astral region is actually a kind of sensitive photographic plate, on which all the thoughts and feelings are impressed as well as events and appearances. The seeming "spirit" contacted is only a simulacrum made of old pictures once created and given life by him, and now energized by the medium. The contact is therefore with the medium.

The gulf of consciousness cannot be self-consciously bridged except by adepts and initiates, those beings who have through many incarnations undertaken the discipline of living during earth life from the point of view of the One Self, having in their hearts at all times only a feeling of brotherhood and union with all others. Acting on this basis, they have no need for kama loka, nor for Devachan, and they are able to cross these states without remorse, without unfulfilled dreams, but with the power of those whose hearts are undivided, who are not torn by life, by the struggle between the better and the dearer. They are awake on both sides of death and on both sides of sleep, without losing the bridge of consciousness which lies between.

In the spiritual state of Devachan, the soul views with delight the creation of objects of an harmonious nature, sprung from the force of unfulfilled noble desire, now subjectively realized. The longing for justice, never attained in earth life because of ignorance, has its full attainment in this place of dreams, and all other longings of the heart which seem contradicted by the realities of earth. And when the soul is rested and at peace with itself, the seeds of rebirth begin to germinate. Pictures begin to be formed on the astral plane, and the essence of all past experience and knowledge in the magnetic germ draws the Ego to seek the form of a house of substance, of vibration; the Ego knows again its ancient knowledge, and joins its powers with the building "lives" of a new mother, of a new family. At last, at time of birth, the soul is strong enough, for a moment, to see the truth of life and death, to see that Law has always reigned, that all that is has become so only through the inevitable chaining of cause and effect; that its own nature, its own past lives, its own dreams, and frustrations, are but the building, link on link, of actions followed by consequent reactions. The Ego sees the line of life ahead, and accepts it—accepts the responsibility of his own Karma, of his character, of his tendencies. He who was once "dead," now lives again on earth.

DEVACHAN—A PERPETUAL MAYA

Of course it is a *state,* so to say, of *intense selfishness,* during which an *Ego* reaps the reward of his unselfishness on earth. He is completely engrossed in the bliss of all his personal earthly affections, preferences, and thoughts, and gathers in the fruit of his meritorious actions. No pain, no grief, nor even the shadow of a sorrow comes to darken the bright horizon of his unalloyed happiness: for it is a *state of perpetual "Maya."* Since the conscious perception of one's *personality* on Earth is but an evanescent dream, that sense will be equally that of a dream in the Devachan—only a hundred-fold intensified. So much so, indeed, that the happy Ego is unable to see through the veil of evils, sorrows, and woes to which those it loved on earth may be subjected. It lives in that sweet dream with its loved —whether gone before or yet remaining on earth; it has them near itself, as happy, as blissful, and as innocent as the disembodied dreamer himself; and yet, apart from rare visions, the denizens of our gross planet feel it not. —*Path.*

ON THE LOOKOUT

Cities of America

Only in relatively recent years have American sociologists begun to devote intensive study to the influence of city life as a general problem. While literally hundreds of writers have done monographic surveys of specific phases of the urban environment, such as its effect on juvenile delinquency, they have in no sense subjected to critical analysis the larger social implications of the modern city as a unique development of our industrial civilization. A beginning was made in research of this sort some twenty-three years ago, by Robert S. Lynd, with his first "Middletown" study, followed in 1937 by *Middletown in Transition.* The psychologist, E. L. Thorndike, in 1939 contributed an exhaustive statistical survey of 310 major cities of the United States, entitled *Your City,* in which some facts of profound significance for social science were disclosed. As Dr. Thorndike said in his Preface: "The conclusions about the quality of life in these cities, the causes of the differences between one city and another, and the ways and means of making all our cities better places for good people to live in are often startling and opposed to popular doctrines; but they follow inevitably from the facts." (*Your City* was reviewed in Theosophy for October, 1939, XXVII, 560.)

Children In Cities

An even more valuable study is Lewis Mumford's *Culture of Cities,* published in 1938. But before quoting from this latter work, it will be well to regard some of the more particularized research of earlier years. Edward M. Barrows, a pioneer investigator of juvenile delinquency, in 1914 provided social science with a careful account of the formation of juvenile gangs in New York City. He lived in the West Side district known as "Hell's Kitchen" for three years in order to gather his material. Following are some of the conclusions of his report, *The City Where Crime Is Play:*

> The child life of the New York tenement neighborhoods is a world apart. Twelve thousand children are arrested annually in New York. These are not exceptional children. Rather, they are typical children. They are mere exhibits drawn from the mass of those children who live in the congested neighborhoods, a small proportion of the children who have done the same things and have not been caught.
>
> These children are not sub-normal, and they come from homes which are typical of whole enormous population districts. They are arrested for the only thing a child can do in the street, and they have

> no place but the street in which to do anything. . . . Child crime in New York is built on play—wholesome, educational play—which the law treats as crime and which street conditions gradually pervert until innocent play becomes moral crime.

Mr. Barrows studied in particular 193 cases of child arrests, finding that all but nine of the offenders had had motives which could be traced to a "play" idea, normal or perverted. Of these nine, two had sought personal revenge, while the motives of seven were economic. A later study, Miriam van Waters' *Youth in Conflict* (1925), develops a similar picture of adolescent problems in Los Angeles, laying stress on the failure of home and community life to inspire the young with ideals, allowing them to drift into habits of indulgence and irresponsibility.

UPROOTED HUMANITY

There are, of course, many factors that contribute to the moral decay characterizing life in the American city, but one clear-cut cause is the enormous growth of the urban population, at the expense of the rural community—a growth so rapid that these great centers have failed almost completely to provide a constructive environment to the families and unmarried young who have been torn from their natural farm or village background. These masses of people come to the cities, attracted by the prospect of jobs, or higher wages, leaving behind the American cultural heritage of the small community, built up through centuries. The far-reaching consequences of this sudden urbanization of American life are suggestively indicated by Lewis Mumford:

> The brakes of tradition and custom were lifted from the exploitation of the land; there was no limit to congestion, no limit to rent-raising; there was no standard of order or decency or beauty to dictate the division and layout and building up of urban structures. Only one controlling agent remained: profit. . . . The two main elements in the new urban complex were the factory and the slum. By themselves they constituted what was called the town. . . .

"SAVAGELY DETERIORATED ENVIRONMENT"

> Such urban masses could and did expand a hundred times without acquiring more than a shadow of the institutions that characterize a city in the sociological sense—that is, a place in which the social heritage is concentrated, and in which the possibilities of continual social intercourse and interaction raise to a higher potential the activities of men. . . . Never before in recorded history have such vast masses of people lived in such a savagely deteriorated environment.

The factory and the slum—main elements in the cities of America! Why have the American people allowed themselves to betray their future to the great god, Profit? Why this extraordinary rapidity in industrial expansion, at incalculable cost of human values, in terms of tenement-bred children and morally warped youth, the loss of family traditions and transmitted standards of conduct? These are the real questions that sociologists should be pondering. They reach deep into the roots of our common social life and bring to the surface the multiple influences which have gradually dimmed the dreams of the American forefathers—have diminished almost to non-existence the sense of social responsibility and individual example once naturally embodied by the political and moral leaders of the nation. These are essentially questions of moral psychology, and will not be answered until America has at least the beginnings of systematic education in this great area of inquiry, as yet practically untouched.

Rebuilding the Community

One eminent American, Dr. Arthur E. Morgan, formerly Chairman of TVA and president of Antioch College, sensing the tragedy of moral decline in the United States, is devoting his energies to the vital task of the reconstruction of community life in America. Dr. Morgan is one of the few men who have seen that the future of the social order in North America, and doubtless, of all the world, must be planned for now in terms of moral values, and he has chosen for his field of work the reform and rebuilding of American community life. In contrast to the descriptive and analytical discussions provided by academic sociologists, Dr. Morgan is leader of a movement to take the practical steps that are necessary for reconstruction. Readers of Theosophy will recall the article describing his objective, published last June, and the reference in the April, 1941, issue (p. 274-5) to his remarkable little book, *The Long Road,* where the underlying philosophy of "Community Service" is set forth. He has since issued a valuable study manual, *The Community,* which surveys the problems involved in community improvement and gives a bibliography for each important aspect of this undertaking.

Qualities of Civilization

In the *Atlantic* for February, an article by Dr. Morgan presents the issue of the community in the light of a lifetime of close observation of the American scene. Writing on "The Community" as "The Seed Bed of Society," Dr. Morgan states his central thesis in a paragraph:

> Controlling factors of civilization are not art, business, science, government. These are its fruits. The roots of civilization are elemental traits—good will, neighborliness, fair play, courage, tolerance, open-minded inquiry, patience. A people rich in these qualities will develop a great civilization, with great art, science, industry, government. If the basic qualities fade, then, no matter how great the wealth, how brilliant the learning, how polished the culture, that civilization will crumble.

NEED FOR VITAL TRADITION

Dr. Morgan traces these basic qualities—which he has elsewhere called the "social vitamins"—to their source in the community life of the past, where, from generation to generation, they have been preserved and transmitted through the centuries. His article, in one sense, is a thoughtful appreciation of the preservative value of custom, to which he adds particular note of the influence of great reformers, such as Thomas More, John Colet, and Erasmus, showing that unless enthusiastic disciples and followers of these men transform the original impulse into a living tradition, embodied in their own lives and work, the efforts of the reformers are in large part wasted.

POPULAR DELUSIONS

Another aspect of the problem of social reconstruction involves a distinction between mere "manipulators" of the social resources of a nation, and the countless unknown individuals who are the true builders of civilization. Thus:

> Statesmen and warriors seldom create issues. More often they seize upon those that are becoming dominant, and precariously hang on to them or ride them, guide or misguide them, through their later stages. There are few more alluring myths in all history than that social wrongs can be set right in one mighty effort directed by great organizing genius at the top. Neither the size and complexity of the task, nor the record of failure, has ended that romantic dream. The evil results of this myth appear not only in the rise of an Alexander, a Napoleon, a Hitler, but also in competition for power and prominence the world over. The mass of people are influenced to hold in low regard the self-mastery of their own lives, and to focus attention on great programs initiated in centers of government and industry. How often have the seemingly colossal achievements of such programs crumbled away by subsidence of the foundations!
>
> World events of today and tomorrow took their determining directions further back in the past than we realize; and the work

> of today, if in accord with fundamental realities, will come to full fruition further in the future than we supposed. When events are full grown, herculean effort may change them but slightly. How little change in the current of human affairs, except in spiritual disorganization and exhaustion, was made by the prodigious efforts of the First World War!

Fallacies of "Social Science"

Dr. Morgan writes as a pioneer of the sociology of tomorrow, the sociology that will find in individual moral character the ultimate building block of the good society. At present, most of the academic representatives of social science are still fascinated by Rousseauist romanticism and biassed by Marxist theories of sudden and violent change. For fifty years they have been absorbing, successively, Biological Mechanism, Psychological Behaviorism, and the amoral social doctrine of the Red revolution. These are the intellectual influences behind the excessive preoccupation of social science with speculative theories about the State, and various "systems" of government, almost no attention being paid to the all-important problem of the social unit—*individual man, his motives and moral life.* It will take many years more before sociologists find their true center of gravity in the moral life of man, for the debris of materialism cluttering their minds is not so easily brushed aside. Dr. Morgan, however, raises the problem of individual morality at the level of community life, thus entering a focus of interest already engrossing the attention of the academicians. It may be hoped, therefore, that his work will prove of great assistance in bringing general recognition of the moral nature of the social problems of the world.

Unknown Builders

Meanwhile, heterodox groups throughout America are finding inspiration in Dr. Morgan's ideas, and are trying as best they can to put them into practice. Unknown along the highways of conventional thought, these groups are nevertheless among the real builders of tomorrow's world. One such fraternity is called the Fellowship of Reconciliation. The December number of this organization's magazine, *Fellowship,* printed an article by Dr. Morgan, in which the following appeal is made for humble effort that *counts:*

> Socially-minded people cannot easily give up the sense of importance and the feeling of adventure which comes from guiding and directing the lives of others. This is partly a form of egotism. Scarcely any greater act of self-denial and self-discipline can be asked of a "leader"

than that he give up large-scale leading, guiding, and directing as his chief activity and become a primary producer of civilization. This change of attention is an imperative need of the present day. In the matter of civilization-building we are coming to be like a military regime which sends all of its men to the front with rifles, leaving no one to make ammunition. By-and-by the time comes when pulling the trigger does not bring any result. In our American life that time may be close upon us.

LOOKING AHEAD

As theosophists look forward to and prepare to assist in the great renaissance of true culture that should arise in the closing years of this century, so Dr. Morgan believes that there must be thorough preparation for the future by a conscious attempt to restore to its original integrity the community life of America. And again, like theosophists, he anticipates a time of trial and partial disintegration before the fruits of such reconstruction may be realized.

> The small community in America has been greatly neglected. Until it is developed and cultivated by much living in it by people of character and purpose, who can see its possibilities as the fundamental unit of civilization, there will not exist in America that reservoir of character on which leadership can draw. The most promising social program will limp or sag.
>
> It may be that the present social order is too set in its structure to be reformed and that a degree of social disintegration is ahead. In such case, if a large number of people throughout America shall have taken it upon themselves to be primary producers of character and culture in small communities, saving the best of the old community, while escaping its provincialism by a spirit of universality and open-minded inquiry, then there might come to exist at the grass roots of our country the beginnings of a new culture when the time comes for leadership to make it into a new way of life.

It should be clear to students of Theosophy that this community movement for which Dr. Morgan is working is a practical social application of the essential purposes, objectives, and even the methods, of the United Lodge of Theosophists.

A SOLAR MYSTERY

Among the developments in Astronomy during 1941 was the conclusion of the Swedish scientist, Dr. Bengt Edlen, of Upsala, that the corona of the sun is much hotter than has formerly been supposed. The New York *Times* (Dec. 28, 1941) review of scientific progress describes his spectroscopic studies of the sun during total eclipses:

> In the spectrum [of the corona] he found lines produced by iron atoms which have been ionized thirteen times. (When atoms are stripped of one or more outer electrons they are said to be ionized.) It was supposed, before Dr. Edlen did this work, that the iron atoms were neutrally or singly and perhaps doubly ionized. To produce the high ionization noted by Dr. Edlen a temperature of between one and two million degrees is required. It follows that the corona must be much hotter than the 6,000 degrees assumed.

Heat and Temperature

Does it? In 1843, Flammarion relates, a comet rushed through the corona of the sun, traversing it for at least two to three hundred thousand miles, during which passage there was no change in the comet's velocity (about 350 miles per second) nor any other perceived influence upon it. How is this imperviousness to heat to be explained? Most of the meteoric bodies which fall into the earth's sphere of attraction, coming at rates averaging 26 miles a second, are rapidly vaporized by the heat generated from the friction of their passage through our atmosphere. These are called "shooting stars," while those that partly survive the trip to earth are named meteorites. If the corona has a temperature of from one to two million degrees, how can comets pass through it without being destroyed? Scientists will say that while there is evidence (spectroscopic evidence of high ionization) to show that this temperature exists, there is still very little "heat," the point being the difference between *degree* of temperature and *amount* of heat. Obviously, the corona cannot be "hot," in the common meaning of this term.

Heavenly Aureole

But what, actually, from the Theosophical point of view, is the corona? A Theosophical Teacher, asked if the corona is made of gases, and why it appears to have a rayed shape during eclipses, answered as follows:

> It is simply the magnetic and ever-present order of the sun, seen by astronomers *only* for a few brief moments during the eclipse and by some of our chelas—whenever they like—of course while in an induced state. A counterpart of what the astronomers call the red flames in the "corona" may be seen in Reichenbach's crystals or in any other strongly magnetic body. The head of a man—in a strong ecstatic condition, when all the electricity of his system is centered in his brain, will represent—especially in darkness—a

perfect simile of the Sun during such periods. . . . The closer to the head or to the aura-emitting body—the stronger and more effulgent the emanation (due to hydrogen science tells us in the case of the flames); hence—the irregular red flames around the Sun or the inner corona. The fact that those are not always present in equal quantity shows only the constant fluctuations of the magnetic matter and its energy, upon which also depends the variety and number of the spots. During periods of magnetic inertia the spots disappear, or rather remain invisible. The further the emanation shoots out the more it loses in intensity, until gradually subsiding it fades out; hence—the "outer corona," its rayed shape being entirely due to the latter phenomenon whose effulgence proceeds from the magnetic nature of the matter and the electrical energy and not at all from intensely hot particles as asserted by some astronomers . . . the sun we see is not at all the central planet of our little Universe, but only its veil or reflection. . . . Passing as comets do through a "reflection" no wonder that the said vapor has "no visible effect on these light bodies."

ELECTRO-MAGNETIC FORCES

. . . the invisible sun is composed of *that* which has neither name, nor can it be compared with anything known to your science—on earth; . . . its reflection contains still less of anything like "gases," mineral matter, or *fire,* though even we when treating of it in your civilized tongue are compelled to use such terms as "vapour" and "magnetic matter." . . . The sun is neither a *solid* nor a *liquid,* nor yet a gaseous glow; but a gigantic ball of electro-magnetic Forces, the store-house of universal *life* and *motion,* from which latter pulsate in all directions, feeding the smallest atom as the greatest genius with the same material until the end of the *Maha Yug.*

Thus the phenomena observed by astronomers might mean high temperature according to conditions on the earth, but indicate entirely different conditions on the sun. (See *Secret Doctrine* I, 484 fn., for various estimates of the sun's temperature, and other entries listed in the *S. D. Index.*) H. P. B. repudiates "the fallacious conception of a 'white-hot, incandescent Sun' perpetually radiating away his heat without compensation into Space." (*S. D.* I, 149.) In *Isis Unveiled* (I, 270-1) she says the same thing, suggesting the existence of a central spiritual sun as the reality behind our physical sun. In the *Transactions* (p. 116) she calls the sun a "reflection" which "gives out nothing of itself." "The Sun has but one distinct function; it gives the impulse of life to all that breathes and lives under its light."

Space Not Empty

Another 1941 discovery was that "interstellar space is not empty," but "contains cosmic dust." Dr. Spitzer of Yerkes Observatory found that these dust particles have a negative charge of two volts and "that the pressure of light is the most powerful force that acts between the particles." (N. Y. *Times* of same date. The pressure of light on substance of low density was discussed in Lookout for October, 1941.) This discovery corroborates the Theosophical teaching that there is no such thing as "empty" space, although the matter with which it is filled may be of a different variety from that presently known. Another Yerkes astronomer, Dr. Swings, has discovered a "mysterious gas in interstellar space." Its spectrum resembles a mixture of carbon and hydrogen. Other matter, discovered by Lick and Harvard scientists, was so faint (in nebulae) "that it could be detected only in its gravitational effects." There are still other states of matter, the theosophist would add, which cannot be detected at all by astronomers.

America At Night School

The pragmatism of Americans is a by-word. Our national history from the Revolution on has been reduced to a series of strikes against economic situations, our national progress computed in terms of tangible acquisitions. Through a process of artificial stimulation we have produced a literature, a psychology, a science, even a religion, to fit our mental budgets of materialistic ideas. "Idealistic" and "altruistic" have become almost derogatory adjectives. One effect of the nation's self-debasement is illustrated in a recent *Harper's* article (August, 1941) by Stuart Demarest. A literature teacher in an evening college, Mr. Demarest sums up the American collegiate's attitude toward literature in his title "What Good Will It Do Me?" He describes his students as "the best of the fabric of American life, and as such they are honest, friendly, intelligent, and good-humored. But since they are typically American they are also painfully cool toward anything resembling the aesthetic, the emotional, the imaginative, or the sentimental."

Mr. Demarest admires "the sort of unblinking honesty which they display, even while exposing an alarming thinness of experience," but says they have not adopted honesty as a principle. Their "honesty" is of the horse-trader's variety:

> No typical evening student objects to bluffing. He holds a job, he has probably got promotions, and he has applied the principles of advertising. What he can't take is an attempt to receive credit for

sincerity when it is apparent that none is present. He expects that an honest man will use a bluff as an honest technic, and he holds that it is the God-given privilege of free men to use their God-given brains to detect it. But he is a genius at detection himself.

"TRAINED TO DISTRUST"

From this pragmatic morality develops naturally a certain narrow-mindedness and a candidly deliberate materialism:

> That same realistic candor of American students, that objectivism and repugnance for sham, leaves them in a circumscribed position. They cannot advance beyond the limits set by their own mental habits. Their rallying cry is, "What good will this do me?" And they expect the answer in an itemized reckoning. If you can't supply it convincingly they will have none of it. . . .
>
> These young Americans are confirmed realists, and they practice their rationalistic creed in every thought and act of lives dominated by their methodical habits of thinking. They will not look beyond the limits of their own interests, because they have been psychologically trained to distrust a mankind they deem as egocentric as themselves.

MINDS IN FLIGHT

The primary purpose of these students, according to their literature teacher, is "to stay cheerful, to keep their minds occupied, to avoid depression." The language is significant. They do not want to *think,* but merely to keep their minds in motion. Mr. Demarest continues:

> But to avoid a negative state of mind they turn almost exclusively to such harmless but hardly nourishing fare as the funny sheet, the light magazine, the frothy radio show, the tired-business-man drama, the night club, the bridge table, the crossword puzzle, the automobile, the juke box, the double-feature, and a multitude of other popular time-fillers. Even modern advertising owes its effectiveness to the well-known fact that they, with millions of others, prefer to read some one else's commercial boasting rather than face the perils of an idle moment.

In the well-chosen words of Mr. Demarest, their recreations show "on what a tenuous, fragile membrane of idle diversion they have stretched out the real experience of their lives." Their teacher finds that they are ashamed of acting on principle, and are unenthusiastic about "great causes":

> They lack the depths of feeling to support personal ideals or sentiments, and they water their enthusiasm for any important ideals with the thought that no tangible gain may be expected where only ideals are at stake. With their joy in realism and good balance they are

> proud of their ability to see both sides of a question, but in their desperate avoidance of bigotry they sacrifice the convictions of character.

How explain this irreverence for ideals, this cynicism toward real values? Mr. Demarest writes:

> The reason why these students, like most Americans, have not built upon their foundations of realistic honesty is that, far from having experienced and understood life, they have actually retreated from it. Not in the sense of having retired from a world of hard truth to a dream cottage, but in a larger sense. They do not know man; they know only their neighbors in business. Their judgment and vision are only as wide as their experience, and their experience is only as wide as their jobs.

Plus Signs

They do not know man, they do not know themselves. But, as Mr. Demarest says, their good sense "has the undeniable virtue of an honesty which might be the cornerstone of great character." One advantage: "Their ability to reduce anything they read to a human value is remarkable." Another: "An American student can be left to find reality for himself." It was one of the "foremost materialists" among his students, according to Mr. Demarest, who defended Tennyson's "In Memoriam":

> "This fellow is grabbing for something. First he runs into science, and his faith goes haywire. Then he loses his closest friend. Don't you think he had something to think about? I think he had plenty, and he can't start living until he gets down to it."

This "materialist," oddly enough, suggests the presence of another aspect of the American student, as of the American citizen. This is the line of American idealism, of spontaneous unselfishness, and the intense devotion to equality and justice, as transmitted by those "revolutionary mystics" we call the "Founding Fathers"; from great and good Lincoln; and from Emerson, the true American Scholar; down to the broadminded scientists, psychologists, and educators of our own generation.

"American Dream"

It was of this "other and more real" America that H. P. B. wrote in 1889:

> But you in America. Your Karma as a nation has brought Theosophy home to you. The life of the Soul, the psychic side of nature, is open to many of you. The life of altruism is not so much a high ideal as a matter of practice. Naturally, then, Theosophy finds a home in many hearts and minds, and strikes a resounding harmony

> as soon as it reaches the ears of those who are ready to listen. There, then, is part of your work: to lift high the torch of Liberty of the Soul of Truth that all may see it and benefit by its light.

From the night school student's Corsican feud with hypocrisy and moral sham, as a clear and unequivocal break with the theological past, to the positive devotion to truth represented by the Theosophical Movement, is a far cry. Yet somehow, this gap must be closed, and the youth of America be brought to hunger for the common good, as they now face their own personal problems and difficulties with good-humored determination. Already there are some pioneers among the younger generation who take this view: Americans, symbolic of future citizens of a republic of brotherhood, who now realize the importance of individual attitude, and action, to the whole of which they form a part. This ever-increasing number of young Americans are beginning to appreciate the value of philosophy, or basic principles for vital living. They are, in fact, dedicated to what James Truslow Adams has named the "American Dream," the ideal society in which each man will be *self*-governed.

"ACTIVE" PASSIVITY!

According to the Los Angeles *Herald-Express* (April 3), Harold M. Sherman claims that in 1937 he communicated telepathically across 3000 miles with Sir Hubert Wilkins, arctic explorer. A check, Mr. Sherman said, revealed "25 per cent transmission of exact facts." Telepathy itself is hardly phenomenal—the word is part of our modern vocabulary. And long before it was named to the average man, it was part of his "living vocabulary," for *feeling from far-off* is a common if unrecognized experience. But *conscious* practice of telepathy is the exception at present. "This will be man's possession in the future, and would be his today were it not for blind dogmatism, selfishness and materialistic unbelief." (*Ocean,* p. 138.) It follows that any system for developing a semi-occult power would be incomplete, when not actually dangerous. Sherman sets down three steps which do more to defy the mind than to instruct it:

> 1. Completely relax the body.
> 2. Induce complete passivity of the conscious mind.
> 3. Fix attention upon the individual to whom you wish to transmit, or from whom you are to receive.

Anyone knowing the difference between "active" and "passive" can see at once the fundamental confusion (of mind) that permits Sherman to follow rule two with rule three, to say nothing of the mediumistic tendency of his "method."